

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Improving Spectrum Efficiency Through)	WT Docket No. 12-64
Flexible Channel Spacing and Bandwidth)	
Utilization for Economic Area-based 800)	
MHz Specialized Mobile Radio Licensees)	
)	
Request for Declaratory Ruling that the)	WT Docket No. 11-110
Commission's Rules Authorize Greater)	
than 25 kHz Bandwidth Operations in the)	
817-824/862-869 MHz Band)	

To: The Commission

**REPLY COMMENTS
OF SOUTHERN COMPANY SERVICES, INC.**

Southern Company Services, Inc. ("Southern") hereby submits these Reply Comments in response to the comments filed on the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* in this proceeding.¹

Based on the overwhelming support for the proposals in the NPRM, Southern urges the Commission to promptly adopt rules in the proceeding to allow bandwidths larger than 25 kHz in the 800 MHz Enhanced Specialized Mobile Radio Service ("ESMR") band.

¹ Improving Spectrum Efficiency Through Flexible Channel Spacing and Bandwidth Utilization for Economic Area-based 800 MHz Specialized Mobile Radio Licensees; Request for Declaratory Ruling that the Commission's Rules Authorize Greater than 25 kHz Bandwidth Operations in the 817-824/862-869 MHz Band, WT Docket Nos. 12-64, 11-110, *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, FCC 12-25 (rel. Mar. 9, 2012) ("NPRM"). The *NPRM* was published in the Federal Register at 77 Fed. Reg. 18991 (March 29, 2012).

The comments in this docket -- from carriers, 800 MHz public safety licensees, equipment manufacturers, and end users -- expressed overwhelming support for the Commission's proposal. In fact, the commenters who addressed the basic question of whether the Commission should allow wider bandwidths in the 800 MHz ESMR band were unanimous in their support.² One commenter stated that it did not oppose the proposal so long as sufficient conditions are included in the rule to protect public safety licensees from interference.³ One other commenter expressed no opinion on the specific proposal, but did recommend that the Commission act expeditiously on proposals such as this by carriers seeking to make more efficient use of existing spectrum.⁴

This overwhelming support is not surprising given the non-controversial nature of the rule changes proposed in the *NPRM*. Allowing licensees in the ESMR portion of the 800 MHz band to employ wider channel bandwidths will serve the public interest, as noted by SouthernLINC Wireless, by "encouraging investment in new wireless broadband networks, making new competitive mobile broadband services available to US consumers, and facilitating the deployment of advanced wireless services to rural, unserved, and underserved areas."⁵ Sprint Nextel notes that adoption of the FCC's proposals will allow ESMR licensees to deploy broadband technologies and thereby "respond to consumer demand for innovative wireless services" and will promote regulatory parity by giving ESMR licensees "the same flexibility to

² Comments of Southern, SouthernLINC Wireless, Sprint Nextel Corporation, RCA-The Competitive Carriers Association, the Telecommunications Industry Association, Thomas Michael Roskos, Jr., Enterprise Wireless Alliance, Public Safety Licensees, and Motorola Solutions, Inc.

³ Comments of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International.

⁴ Comments of AT&T Services, Inc. ("AT&T").

⁵ Comments of SouthernLINC Wireless, at 8.

deploy wideband and broadband systems as competitors operating in other bands.”⁶ Southern also concurs with TIA that “elimination of the legacy channel spacing and bandwidth limitation rules for EA-based SMR licensees will be a boon to innovation in wireless services and devices.”

Southern agrees that the Commission should act expeditiously to adopt the forward-looking proposals in the *NPRM*. As explained in its initial Comments, Southern and its electric operating company affiliates rely on mobile radio service provided by SouthernLINC Wireless. Adoption of the rule changes proposed in this proceeding will allow SouthernLINC Wireless to investigate implementation of broadband radio technologies that will make more efficient use of SouthernLINC’s 800 MHz spectrum and permit it to provide new and innovative broadband services that are increasingly needed by Southern’s electric operating companies.

WHEREFORE, THE PREMISES CONSIDERED, Southern urges the Commission to promptly adopt the rule changes proposed in the *NPRM*.

Respectfully submitted,

SOUTHERN COMPANY SERVICES, INC.

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⁶ Comments of Sprint Nextel, at 4 and 10.